

THE BRITISH COLONIST

Wednesday Morning, Feb. 11, 1863.

TO ADVERTISERS.

All advertisements, unless the time for which they are to be inserted is specified, will be continued until ordered out, and so charged.

JOB PRINTING.

For Book and Job Printing of every description neatly executed. Terms, cash on delivery of the work.

Fire Department.

Man is the only animal that has made fire his servant; and the fervent wish of every good citizen is that it may never become his master. There is however a faint probability that the latter might be the case if the Fire Department of this city became much reduced; and there is something more than a probability that the department is in a languid condition. There are three companies in the city: the Deluge and Tiger Engine Companies, and the Hook and Ladder Company. According to the Firemen's Amendment Act, the full force of a company in active firemen, cannot exceed sixty-five men. That is the limit fixed by law. The actual force—the total number of active firemen in the three companies, does not exceed eighty men—not half the number necessary to put the department in a high state of efficiency. It is even rumored that the Hook and Ladder Company have it under contemplation to disband, owing to reduced members and correspondingly increased dues. The Tiger Company are in difficulties likewise. The cause of the reduction in the members of the department is put to the account of the unusual burthens laid upon firemen here, in comparison with other countries where Volunteer Firemen exist. Here they have to do jury duty, pay road taxes, pay the rent of engine house, keep a steward to look after the property, and at every alarm turn out as firemen or at stated periods for drill. We confess that the burthens heaped on the firemen, taken all together, are rather weighty, and when coupled with the fact of an actual and prospective reduction of the force, the question of reform in the Fire Department is an important one, deserving the immediate attention of the Municipal as well as the Colonial authorities. A remedy, and an immediate remedy is required, and ought to be applied at once. It is primarily, and of a right, the duty of the City Council to deal with the matter and see that the lives and property of our citizens are guarded by every reasonable protection against loss by fire. Insurance companies may afford one kind of protection; but it is to the Fire Companies that we look for the suppression of fires. But it is no use arguing the question, who put out fires? Every one understands that. The question to be dealt with, is, how the department can be made more efficient than it is now? The firemen have stated their reasons why the force is reduced; and they tell us how it can be increased. It is their wish that the entire department be placed under the control of the City Council. Next, they want a law passed to exempt them from jury duty. Then they desire the City authorities to provide engine houses at the public expense. Whatever other financial burthens may be necessary they are disposed to bear them by the payment of monthly dues; and are persuaded that if these reforms be instituted, that the department would soon be restored to its former efficiency. We confess that we can discover nothing in their demands that might not be granted. The City authorities are the proper functionaries to have under their charter the supreme control of the Fire Department. To protect the property of citizens is a first duty of a corporation. The exemption from jury duty might very well be granted. The restriction against the increase of each company beyond sixty-five members makes it impossible for men to shirk jury duty by becoming firemen. The late increase in our population renders jury duty lighter than they were a year ago; and as a matter of course the city is better able to grant an exemption to a public spirited body of men who hold themselves in readiness at any moment to run to the rescue of their neighbors. Imposing the rent of engine house on the firemen, is a little too bad. Firemen in common with others, may have property to protect; but why they should bear all the expense of protection, is something that we cannot comprehend. We feel an unwilling to increase civic taxes as any one; but we certainly would regard the money as legitimately spent if devoted either to building engine houses or to paying the rent of them. It is a very wrong principle to exact from private individuals, what ought to be raised by public contribution. When the principle works a public injury and a common danger, we repudiate it, and ask the City authorities to take up the question of reform in the Fire Department, and deal with it at once.

The Cariboo Mail.

We have called the attention of the Government over and over again to the pressing necessity for reasonable mail facilities being established between this city and Cariboo.

The link between here and New Westminster is the best on the route; but even that admits of improvement; yet it might be borne with some degree of tranquility if there were reasonable facilities provided at that point.

At present the mails go up to Douglas and Yale when the river steams go, or more correctly speaking when Deitz & Nelson's Express goes. By Post Office regulation it goes up every week; but these enterprising expressmen go often, and carry the mail in along with them. From Douglas to Lillooet the express carries the mail. The postage on a letter by mail is twenty-five cents from New Westminster to Lillooet; and it is alleged that this heavy rate stops correspondence. Even the expressmen, who are the real mail carriers, find that their business is injured by high postage rates; for the government exacts the letter postage on every letter they carry. Moreover, private parties invariably bring down and carry up packets of letters in defiance of law and postal regulations, simply because the high postage and express make it an object.

The route from Yale to Lytton¹ in the same predicament as from Douglas to Lillooet. To Williams Lake from New Westminster letter postage is fifty cents; to Antler Creek, \$1. The rate is exorbitant, and the semi-monthly mail in summer an absurdity.

To expressmen, either up or down, the public are mainly indebted for the transmission of letters and papers; and such will continue to be the case, except new mail facilities be provided—except the mail goes often, and the postage becomes cheaper.

As it is the expressmen have to charge a dollar extra on a letter from Cariboo, simply because the Government has obstructed the passage of free letters to that extent. The thing is monstrous. Better leave postal matters entirely to private enterprise than pile on a letter tariff that is unsurmountable, besides establishing a prohibition against the introduction of newspapers into the mines. We learn that a postal commission, composed of Judge Crase, and Postmaster General Spaulding, has been

named by the Governor. Whether those high functionaries have or have not reported a new and enlightened postal system, we know not. We do know, however, that the Government has made no announcement of the results of their deliberations. It is hoped, however, that when the new postal scheme is laid before the public, that we shall see something worthy of the country, and not a miserable, stingy, slow-coach affair, unworthy of the country, and answering no public end. What is wanted is a weekly mail to Williams Creek from Victoria, running over the Yale and Douglas routes, carrying letters between the extreme points for twenty-five cents per half ounce, and newspaper free. The Government is well able to afford such a convenience, and the public sincerely desire it.

NEW ADVERTISEMENTS.

PAPER HANGINGS!

TO-MORROW.

THURSDAY, Feb. 12th, 1863.

At 7 P. M.

J. CORIN

WILL SELL

By Auction,

AT HIS SALESROOM, FORT STREET,

2,500 pieces of WALL PAPER,

In lots of from 20 to 30 pieces.

The Goods are now on view.

SELL

METROPOLITAN LODGING HOUSE

YATES STREET,

OPPOSITE WELLS, FARGO & CO.'S.

MRS. IMMEL,

HAVING GREATLY ENLARGED

and fitted up and furnished in first rate style

the above Lodging House, is now prepared to accommodate

One Hundred Persons.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN'S PARLORS

Rooms per Week.....from \$2 to \$7.

Loggings per Night.....from 50 cents to \$1.

Families Accommodated in the best Style

SELL 14

J. J. SOUTHAGE & CO.,

COMMISSION MERCHANTS

Union Wharf,

VICTORIA, VANCOUVER ISLAND

And Victoria street, San Francisco, California.

SELL 14

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NEW ADVERTISEMENTS.

AUCTION.

THIS DAY,

Wednesday, Feb. 11,

At 11 o'clock, A. M.

J. A. McCREA,

WILL SELL

AT SALESROOM, ON WHARF ST.,

BALANCE OF THE

Stock of Retailer !

— CONSISTING IN PART OF —

Candles, Butter, Lard, Cheese, Tea,

Currants, Oregon Bacon, Soap,

Peaches, Dried Apples, Pigs

Feet, Oatmeal, Hominy, Buck-

wheat, Sugar, etc.

— ALSO —

5 cts Coal Oil;

20 kgs Boston Syrup;

10 bbls Baker's Extra Flour;

14 bx English Sperm Candles, SELL 14

AUCTION.

FRIDAY, Feb. 13th,

At 11 o'clock, A. M.

J. A. McCREA.

WILL SELL

AT SALESROOM,

On a Liberal Credit,

ENGLISH

CLOTHING

For act. of whom it may concern

DAMAGED !

— ON —

VOYAGE OF IMPORTATION

One Bale, 142 pr Grey Blankets,

— IN ORDER —

Pilot, Doeskin, and Fancy Tweed Pants

Sac, Pea and Reeling Jackets ;

Blue Plut Overcoats ;

Silk, Cloth, and Fancy Vests ;

Boys' Clothing ;

Men's and Boys' Caps ;

Dressing Gowns ;

Felt Hats ;

Sou-Westers ;

Shawls, etc., etc.

TERMS AT SALE.

SELL 14

John Bull Hotel.

—

A " FREE AND EASY"

THIS EVENING.

FOR SALE;

BY VIRTUE OF THE CONDITIONS

of a recent Settlement, made by

Colonel H. H. Prindle, of this city,

Buildings, Stock and Furniture,

Together with everything connected with

the same.

Dated February 10th, 1863.

E. H. PRINDLE.

Montgomery 1411 St.

NOTICE.

TO THE ADMIRERS of Fine Arts,

HERE CALL CAUTION THE PUBLIC

TO THE FREE AND EASY

TO THE ROYAL CHARTER RESTAURANT,

situated on Front street, consisting of

Buildings, Stock and Furniture,

Together with everything connected with

the same.

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AUCTION SALES.

J. A. McCREA will sell at 11 o'clock a. m., at his saleroom, the balance of the stock of a retailer, comprising Butter, Lard, Cheese, Candies, Coal Oil, Syrup, Flour, etc.

P. M. BACKUS will sell at 11 o'clock, a. m., at saleroom, Carpenters and Blacksmith's Tools, such as Augers, Saws, Chisels, Anvils, Vices, Nails, etc., etc.

Lancashire Relief Fund.

[SUBSCRIPTION RECEIVED AT THIS OFFICE.]
February 10th, St. David's Benevolent Society, per James Williams and T. D. Price, \$50.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, Feb. 10, 1863.
House met at 3:45 p. m. Present—The Speaker, and Messrs. Tolmie, Franklin, Ring, Burnaby, and Trimble.

equitable RAILWAY.

Mr. Burnaby introduced a motion from the members of the British Railway Company, signed by their agent, Mr. Drake, asking permission of the House to withdraw the Railway Bill from their consideration during the present session.

On motion of Mr. Franklin, it was resolved that leave be granted, and the same referred to the Committee on Standing Orders.

STAMPS.

Mr. Burnaby introduced a Bill to establish the decimal system in the employment of stamps under the Stamp Act, 1862. He estimated that a bill of this kind was found to be necessary after the passage of the Currency Act.

It was read a first time.

SUPPLY.

The two Bills of Supply voted by the House in Committee of the Whole, passed a first reading.

INFERIOR COURTS.

The House then went into Committee of the Whole upon the Bill to constitute Inferior Courts of Civil Justice, which passed with one slight amendment.

The Committee reported the bill complete, when the Speaker having resumed the chair, the House adjourned until this afternoon, at 3 o'clock.

DROPPED DEAD.

A case of awfully sudden death happened yesterday morning, at the Hotel de France, in this city. A young man named Maximilian Fischer, who was employed as an extra waiter in the establishment, was in his usual health and spirits and had been attending to his duties in the Saloon a moment before his death took place. He had just sat down to partake of breakfast and instantly fell back, apparently in a fainting fit. Dr. Day was immediately summoned and promptly attended but medical skill was of no avail for the poor fellow expired in a few minutes after the doctor arrived. Dr. Dickson was subsequently called in, but the hand of death had already laid hold of his victim and no human power could be of any service. Dr. Day is of opinion that "congestive apoplexy" was the cause of death. The Coroner directed Dr. Haggan to make a post mortem examination of the body last evening, and the inquest sat at 10 o'clock this morning.

SINGULAR INCIDENT.—The body of the young man, who died suddenly at the Hotel de France yesterday morning, remained warm near the heart and on the lower part of the stomach for six or seven hours after his decease.

So convinced were his friends that it was an instance of suspended animation that about 7 p. m. Doctors Clerjoh and Trimble were hurriedly summoned. They both, after examination, stated positively that he had been dead seven hours. "The non-rigidity of the body was the more remarkable as the body had remained in a room without a fire for several hours after the attack, which was that of a man of good character.

COMOX ROAD.—From Mr. Munro, who has just returned from Nanaimo, we learn that of the road from that place to Comox, 20 miles are already completed. The route follows the coast line very closely, and so far as the Qualicum River passes through dense forests. It is, however, remarkably level throughout, but two hills occurring on that portion of the road. A bridge, about 350 feet in length, over the Nanaimo River will be required, and there are several stumps of considerable width on the way. Game is reported to be very abundant that the road parties are living upon venison and wild game, to the no small economy of their provisions. About eighteen inches of snow lay upon the ground when Mr. Munro was up there, but the operations of the laborers had not been suspended in consequence. On the Qualicum River, Capt. Stuart, of the Hudson Bay Company's service, has a ranch. The entire route, including Mr. Munro's ranch, under the management of Mr. Cranshaw, whose merits as an actor and play-writer are well known to require praise.

PANORAMA.—The proprietors of Morrison's Panorama leave to-day by the Enterprise for New Westminster, where they intend exhibiting their magnificent panorama for a few nights. In late papers from Portland, &c., the exhibition is exceedingly well spoken of, and described as having given great satisfaction to crowded houses. It was so well liked that many went to see it a second time. On the proprietors return from New Westminster the citizens of Victoria will be offered an opportunity of witnessing the panoramic views, which are nearly eighty in number.

STREK FAST.—We noticed yesterday a waterman's cart stuck fast in a slough, on Douglas street, that is caused by a quantity of water running from some premises nearby. Allowing bodies of water to run on the thoroughfare in such manner as to interrupt the traffic is especially forbidden by the Ordinance on Nuisances. The master should receive the attention of the city authorities.

THE NEW CISTERNS.—The excavation for the new cistern at the corner of Yates and Douglas streets that is being made under the direction of the Chief Engineer of the Fire Department, is steadily progressing, having been sunk already about five feet. We may observe that the contractors having this in hand are about the only persons who comply with the Municipal Ordinance, by leaving in their obstruction to the highway and placing lights as required by law.

THE APPROACHING CONCERT.—We had the pleasure last evening of being present at a practice of the *Enfants de Paris*, who are engaged in preparing for the approaching concert, under the direction of Mme. Sandrie, one of the ablest musicians. There is something very grand and elevating in the patriotic songs and hymns which were the subject of the night's practice, and we shall be greatly mistaken if the forthcoming concert will not be one of the most brilliant ever given in Victoria.

FEDERAL EXPENSES.—The annual expenses of the United States Government on the Pacific coast are now \$7,000,000, while the revenues from all sources do not amount to \$5,000,000, leaving Uncle Sam, minus \$2,000,000 at the end of the year.

SHIPMENT OF BREADSTUFFS FROM SAN FRANCISCO.—In the last half of 1862 there was 250,651 barrels of flour shipped from San Francisco, and in the year preceding that date, a total of 364,890 barrels were shipped from the port for consumption elsewhere.

FROM COWICHAN.—The schooner Rebecca, with 40,000 feet of lumber from Mr. Seward's mill at Cowichan, arrived yesterday morning. Though an American vessel, she made this trip by the special permission of the Harbormaster, who gave her clearance on representations being made to him that no British coaster suitable for the purpose was available in the harbor.

SHOEMAKERS WANTED.—It appears by the *Puget Sound Herald*, that there is not a shoemaker in Steilacoom or its neighborhood. The people there feel the want of one very much, and the opening for a tradesman of that kind is represented as a good one.

NEWSPAPER SUSPENDED.—The Oregon Farmer has been compelled to suspend publication for want of sufficient patronage.

THE THAMES.—We learn that the steamer Thamas, which according to our contemporary, was to have played such a conspicuous part in the Confederate plot, will probably be converted into a sailing vessel. Her owners have under consideration a project for removing her machinery and screw, and substituting masts of a more suitable character for those which she at present possesses.

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